Scheme to carry forward unused local calls

3837. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a scheme to carry forward monthly unused local calls to help retired employees and poor customers;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be introduced; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The number of free calls clubbed with the rental is a part of the tariff regime. Regulation of tariff is a function of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in terms of TRAI Act, 1997 and TRAI (Amendment) Act, 2000. All the telecom service providers in the country are bound to follow the Telecom Tariff Orders as notified by TRAI from time to time.

Post Offices in Punjab

3838. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices opened till date in rural and border areas of Punjab during the last three years;

(b) the number of post offices proposed to be opened in Punjab under the future schemes having e-mail, internet and computer facilities;

(c) whether Government propose to provide the above facilities in all important post offices in rural areas within a fixed time-frame; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 29 Post Offices have been opened till date in rural areas and one Post Office opened in border area of Punjab during the last three years.

(b) Opening of new Post Offices in Punjab, under the future schemes having e-mail, internet and computer facilities, is subject to the fulfillment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

(c) and (d) Computerization of Post Offices and provision of other facilities is based on the traffic analysis and return on investment from such services.

MoU between India and New Zealand

3839. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and New Zealand have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Information Technology for Research and Development, skills exchange and business-to-business co-operation in the Hi-tech sector;

(b) if so, whether New Zealand has urged India to develop Information Technology in that country;

(c) whether New Zealand considers India as IT power house; and

(d) if so, to what extent India has agreed to provide all co-operation in software development and training in New Zealand?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An Arrangement was signed on 7th December 2001 between Government of the Republic of India and Government of New Zealand for co-operation in Information Technology sector to promote the development of relations between business, research bodies, educational institutions, central and local Government agencies and other ancillary